

Letter from Gardiner Greene Hubbard to Alexander Graham Bell, April 18, 1879, with transcript

Letter written by Gardiner Greene Hubbard to Alexander Graham Bell. BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY, Gardiner G. Hubbard, President, Washington, D. C., April 18, 1879. Dear Mr. Bell:

From what May says I think you misunderstood my views in regard to the foreign patents. The only object I should have in going out would be to look after your interest. I never had any desire, as you will recollect, to have any interest in foreign patents. I do not like anything so far off. I think however that Mabel's interest in the English, French and Austrian patents is too great to be neglected and that if some one does not go out and look after them at once, they may all be lost. I therefore thought it was my duty as trustee, to go out at the expense of the trust fund and look after that interest. But as you were disinclined to have any of the trust money expended for that purpose, I then thought I would go at my own expense, for the purpose of protecting her interests. You then kindly offered to give me an interest in your foreign patents. I have read your statement of these, and do not think you have reserved anything for yourself that is worth looking after — even if any one was so inclined.

You had given away so many of the countries to your relatives, and have put the rest out of your hands through your arrangement with Col. Reynolds.

If I go out I shall take Mr. Blake's transmitter, some magneto and battery telephones. Switches etc., including all the 2 apparatus for constructing a district system and then, through Mr. Scott, try to reorganize the English Company and put some life into it, and make some settlement with Mr. Roosevelt for the French patent and arrange with parties for the Austrian patent.

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I will be obliged if you will write to me fully your views upon the subject.

I am going South tonight with Gertrude as she is not very well.

As soon as I return, I shall see Prof. Baird and try to make an arrangement with him by which you can have a place in the Smithsonian, with the understanding that I shall aid him at the next session in getting an appropriation of \$10,000 to cover your salary, expenses etc.

I believe you agree fully with me that an arrangement of that kind will be beneficial to you as well as the Smithsonian. You could have Edward Wilson as an assistant in whatever you did.

I think that your residence in Boston would be unfavorable to any philosophical pursuits, as you would necessarily be drawn more or less into business entanglements and prevented from making such investigations as you might wish. I am

Yours truly, Gardiner G. Hubbard. P. S. Please look at the end of Jones' book on the Telegraph in the drawer in your bedroom and get the rates from New York to the places named in the enclosed list in 1852.